2. Funding pattern for Integrated Infrastructure Development Centre (IIDCs) changed from 2:3 between Government of India and SIDBI to now 4:1. The Government of India funds would be in the nature of grant.

3. Transport subsidy scheme has been extended by 7 years upto 31.3.2007 and the amount is to be disbursed through North-Eastern Development Finance Corporation Limited.

4. Industries located in the Growth Centres would be given capital investment subsiby at the rate of 15% of their investment in plant & machinery subject to a ceiling of Rs. 30 lakh.

5. Growth Centres & IIDCs become tax-free zones for income tax and excise duty for a period of 10 years. Certain high growth potential industries have also been given the tax-free status irrespective of the location in the North-East.

6. An interest subsidy of 3% on the working capital loans would be provided for a priod of ten years to the new units.

7. Comprehensive Insurance Scheme for new industrial units has been put in place.

8. The Prime Ministers Rozgar Yojna (PMRY) liberalized.

(b) The Government doesn't monitor industrial investment in response to specific policy package.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Not applicable in view of answer in (c) above.

**Product Patents Legislation**

1881. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE & INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a new legislation to provide for product patents in India is on the anvil;

(b) if so, the cardinal features of the proposed legislation;

(c) whether Government are aware that the introduction of product patents would be detrimental to the Indian Industries vis-a-vis the Multi-national Companies;

(d) if so, the steps proposed to safeguard the farmers;

(e) whether the major political parties and the representative bodies of Indian Industries and Commerce would be consulted with regard to the provisions of the amended Product Patents Bill; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN): (a) to (f) In accordance with the obligations contained in the agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs), India is required to amend the Patents Act, 1970 by 31 December, 1999 in respect of scope of patentable inventions, providing for exclusions from patentability, providing a uniform term of patent protection of 20 years, alignment of compulsory licensing provisions, etc. An additional period of five years, that is, till 31 December, 2004 is also available for extending product patent protection to areas of technology not protected so far. This would mainly be in the areas of pharmaceuticals and agricultural chemicals.

Government has maintained a close interface with individuals organisations and interest groups concerned and has also organised a series of Interactive Sessions on 'Approaches to the Indian Patent Law' in different cities of country between 28 June, 1999 to 9 August, 1999.

**Factors affecting country's export**

1882. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE & INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that poor infrastructure and procedural bottlenecks are some of the factors which adversely affected our country's exports; and

(b) if so, what are the steps Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (b) Exports from India (in US $ terms) during the period April—October, 1999-2000 compared to corresponding period in 1998-99 have shown a growth of 10.02%. However, the Government has been receiving representations from various trade bodies on the infrastructure constraints and need for